

THE POET IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL

Everyone knows fags write it
as a compensation for limp wrists.
The coach sees it as a threat
to the Wing-T. His beefy guards
might caress blocking dummies
if they were ever afflicted by it
and have to be taken to the edge
of town and talked to, man to man.
The principal knows it's federally
financed and smiles and waves
when he passes the poet in the halls.
English teachers wait for the bearded
one to do something zany
in iambic pentameter before moving on
to the chapter on dangling modifiers.
Housewives look for headlines, the word
RAPE attached to a picture of the prettiest
cheerleader disembodied in a bluebonnet field,
a love poem pinned to her panties.

Which leaves the kids, as if
kids ever counted for anything.
The younger ones write of King Kong
toying with Fay Wray or their puppy
dog they hug and hug and hug
till the visiting poet has them
run it over with a Mack truck
to inverted haiku, 7-5-5.
The best of the older ones want
The Poetry Club to tack under their pictures
in The Zephyr, next to the Glee Club,
Archery Club, Future Mums of America Club,
which leaves the poet clubbing flies
and drinking Thunderbird at 3 a.m.
dreaming of indifferent, brown-skinned
girls moaning to metaphors
in abandoned cornfields all summer long.

-- William Joyce

Austin TX

THREE WOMEN

Regrettable.
Regrettable.
Regrettable.

COMMON SENSE

A breeze on
sunned concrete
and sweaty bodies.